

MAKING WASHINGTON COMMUNITIES LESS VULNERABLE TO THE IMPACTS OF HAZARDS



HAZARDS

Each year, hundreds of Washington State communities suffer property losses, business closings, and disruption of life due to hazards. These include flooding, wind storms, winter storms, and earthquakes among others. Communities are often subject to repeated disasters, resulting in a costly spiral of destruction and rebuilding.

While the forces of nature cannot be subdued, advance planning by the public and private sectors and individual citizens can reduce the state's vulnerability to hazards. Smart development patterns, building standards, and other practices can ensure safer homes, businesses, and communities for today and tomorrow.

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES THROUGH HAZARD MITIGATION

Mitigation is the practice of reducing the impact of disasters. By investing in mitigation measures before a disaster occurs, communities can significantly reduce the cost of emergency response, recovery, repair, and reconstruction following disaster. One typical measure is the conservation of natural and ecologically-sensitive areas (such as wetlands, floodplains, and dunes) that enable the environment to absorb some of the impact of hazard events.

By reducing costs and promoting conservation, mitigation programs can help communities achieve sustainability ensuring long-term economic vitality and environmental health for the community as a whole.



THE MITIGATION PLANNING INITIATIVE (MPI)

MPI is an ambitious, long-range program to reduce the vulnerability of Washington State communities to the impacts of hazards. It is a voluntary, outcome-driven program designed to encourage Washington homeowners, businesses, state agencies, and local governments to incorporate mitigation into their everyday decisions.

The initiative is led by the Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division. Initiative team membership is open. Anyone who wants to participate is welcome. MPI is bringing the concept of hazard mitigation planning to both the public and private sectors throughout Washington State.

**EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
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MPI Activities

- ◆ Develop outreach strategies to communicate the Mitigation Planning Initiative to local governments and state agencies.
- ◆ Provide technical assistance and training in hazard assessment, vulnerability analysis, and mitigation planning.
- ◆ Develop separate mitigation planning workbooks for local governments, businesses, and state agencies.
- ◆ Work with state agencies and others to refine the *Washington State Hazard Mitigation Strategy*.
- ◆ Conduct residential acquisition workshops in order to help communities determine if acquisition of repetitively flooded properties is a viable mitigation alternative, and to assist them in preliminary work and analysis.
- ◆ Conduct hazard mitigation planning workshops to assist local jurisdictions in meeting a new requirement to have a mitigation plan as a requisite to receiving Hazard Mitigation Grant funds beginning in the fall of 2000.
- ◆ Make mitigation publications available in multiple formats.
- ◆ Build partnerships that embrace pre-disaster mitigation at every opportunity.
- ◆ Become the most disaster resistant state in the United States.

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Emergency Management Division

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MITIGATION PLANNING INITIATIVE



Building A Disaster Resistant State

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